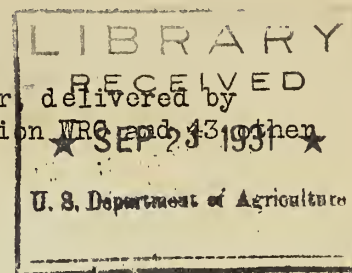


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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

A radio talk prepared by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, delivered by Mabel C. Stienberger, Bureau of Home Economics, through Station WRC and 43 other associate NBC stations, September 10, 1931.



How do you do, Homemakers!

Today is the third of our talks on food preservation, in line with the save-the-surplus-food campaign launched by the President's Emergency Committee for Employment. The pickling of fruits and vegetables has a more important place in this work than we might appreciate on first thought. Pickles are to many of us just accessories to the meal, falling in the class of condiments, but there are pickles and PICKLES. I mean that the term is a broad one, covering a wide range of salt preserved foods. Some of them are put down in a brine that brings about a mild lactic acid fermentation of the sugar in the vegetable and others are converted into a true relish by the addition of some vinegar and spices and perhaps sugar.

In the first class, that is the plain salted or fermented products, we have sauer kraut, brined corn on the cob, cauliflower, string beans, beets, chayotes, mango melons, green peppers, and green tomatoes, so we may think of brining as a means of holding food over for the winter much as canning or drying does. As a rule canning or drying is to be preferred because food values and natural flavors are retained better by those methods. Brined vegetables are a little too salty to prepare as the fresh, canned, or dried ones may be. But under conditions such as we have now when money for containers is limited in many sections and there is an over supply of raw material, we have an emergency which justifies curing in brine. Detailed directions are given in Farmers' Bulletin 1438, "Making Fermented Pickles". The bulletin will be useful in any brining or picklemaking that you do.

We feel in the bureau that all pickles, whole or chopped, sweet or sour, spiced or "dilled", have better color and flavor and are more crisp in texture if the vegetables are put down in brine for several weeks and then freshened in clear water or in weak vinegar before they are made up into pickles. It is of course always necessary to use some method of getting rid of part of the water that vegetables contain so it will not be drawn out into the pickles and dilute their flavor and also decrease their keeping qualities. You may be more familiar with a short method of drawing out water over night by sprinkling salt over sliced or chopped vegetables and then draining or squeezing out the salty vegetable juice the next morning. That method makes it possible to finish up a batch of pickles in a short time, but your resulting pickles are not so good. There are really several advantages of the long brine method. It is very easy to do it your busy season while the weather is hot, you can finish your picklemaking later. Besides, it is so convenient to put down onions, cauliflower, green peppers, and green tomatoes in turn, and then combine them in the fall when you make your relish mixture.

There are two things to be very particular about in picklemaking if you would have pickles of excellent standard, -- crisp, solid, and of good color and flavor. First, start out with only the very best materials, no matter what method you choose. Use freshly gathered, firm vegetables, pure cider vinegar, and the best quality spices. When whole spices are used it is a very good thing to rinse them off in cold water before putting them into a bag. Rinsing gets rid of any little particles that might discolor the pickles.

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And second: If you make chopped pickles by a recipe that calls for heating or cooking, remember that the least possible heating is desirable, lest you cook away the flavor of the vinegar and spices, or wilt, darken, and toughen the pickles.

With watermelons still in season, I am sure many of you are making sweet pickle of the rind. Our directions result in especially crisp watermelon pickle. This recipe and others for various kinds of relishes are grouped in a mimeographed circular of the Bureau of Home Economics, which is called "Pickles and Relishes". I am sure you will want these recipes and also Farmers' Bulletin 1438, both of which are free.

Next week, Miss Scott will give the household calendar, telling you some of her ideas on selecting and making rompers for very young children.